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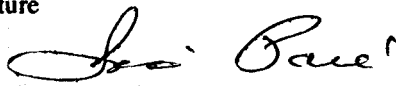
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Date of report	Name and title	Signature
2/28/91	Léo Paré, Delegate General	

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QUÉBEC



Québec
Government Office
in Atlanta

UPDATE

Vol. XII, No. 2, February 1991

1991 USHERS IN A FULL ROSTER OF POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Premier Robert Bourassa, who had been absent from public life since November following the removal of a malignant melanoma, resumed his usual activities in January. That includes presiding at the regular Wednesday meeting of his cabinet. While vacationing in Florida in early January, Mr. Bourassa met with Ontario Premier Bob Rae to discuss economic and constitutional issues. The 36 members of the Bélanger-Campeau Commission on Québec's political and constitutional future met in Montréal January 15 and 16 and returned to Québec City the 17th and 18th just prior to a two-day constitutional forum on youth. When the final phase of consultation is completed, the Commission will meet behind closed doors to prepare its recommendations which are to be submitted March 28.

The Parti québécois held its annual convention from January 25 to 27 in Québec City. The Québec Liberal Party meets in Montréal from March 8 to 10, at which time the Party's constitutional committee formed in April 1990 will make its position known.

The National Assembly reconvenes on March 12. In the meantime, the parliamentary commission on institutions will review the mandate of Québec's ombudsman and Health Minister Marc-Yvan Côté's far-reaching health and social services reform bill will be examined at public hearings.

PREMIER ANNOUNCES MEASURES TO STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

Premier Robert Bourassa has announced measures aimed at injecting \$1.5 billion into the Québec economy to help counter the effects of the recession. Québec will

advance the timetable for \$311 million in public works expenditures, offer mortgage subsidies for new housing construction, increase funding for small and medium-sized businesses experiencing temporary financial difficulties and spend more on regional development.

"These are short-term objectives," Mr. Bourassa said at a January 17 news conference. "It's not a question of announcing things that will have an effect in two, three, four or five years."

Quebecers who buy new homes before September 30 of this year will have a choice of a guaranteed mortgage rate of 8.5% in the next three years - the lowest level in 25 years - or a subsidy equivalent to 4.5% of the cost of the house, up to a maximum of \$5,000. The measures will lead to 8,000 housing starts and create 16,000 jobs in 1991, Mr. Bourassa said.

The government will allocate another \$50 million for home renovation, including rental housing and rural housing. It will also spend an additional \$145 million this year on education, \$105 million on health and \$61 million on culture, largely through construction or renovation projects.

QUEBEC'S CREDIT RATING UNCHANGED: MOODY'S

Moody's Investors Service of New York gave Québec an Aa3 rating before Hydro-Québec launched a new bond issue January 30. Moody's based the rating, which has remained unchanged since July 1986, on the fact that the province's finances are well controlled, notwithstanding the recession. The Québec government, said the firm, has succeeded in compressing its expenditures and keeping the deficit at an acceptable level. The steady growth of the Québec economy during the 1980s and its diversification were also cited.

SPAR BUILDING NEW GENERATION OF COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES

Telesat Mobile Inc. (TMI) of Canada and American Mobile Satellite Corp. (AMSC) of the U.S. have announced the signing of a contract to build two identical communications satellites to service their respective territories. Spar Aerospace Ltd. of Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue and Hughes Aircraft of California won contracts worth \$120 million each for an integrated voice-and-data mobile communications system that will "blanket North America from the Panama Canal to the high Arctic," as one official put it.

The three-ton mobile satellites, or MSAT, will be built jointly by Spar and Hughes. Spar is responsible for the payload, or electronic components. Hughes will assemble the main structure, known as the bus. The two firms have worked together before on Anik satellites.

Scheduled for service in 1994, the high-powered link will allow trucking and shipping lines, resource industries and other users to keep in touch with employees and customers by means of a small satellite terminal and telephone. The system will also bring mobile-phone service to the 85% of the continent that now lies outside the range of cellular networks, and offer fax and computer hookups, messaging, paging and position location services.

TMI is a 50% affiliate of Telesat Canada. Unitel Communications has 30% while a Japanese group headed by C. Itoh & Co. has 20%. It says MSAT will be profitable within two years of startup and forecasts \$2 billion in revenues over the 12-year life of the satellite from sales of air time to subscribers.

PAPERWEEK: A WORLD FORUM

Montréal hosted the 78th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association during PaperWeek, January 28 to February 1. The Association's Technical Section offered more than 2,000 delegates from Canada, the United States, Europe, Asia and South America 40 workshops on the most recent technological developments in the sector, while EXFOR '91, the largest annual exhibition of pulp and paper equipment in the world, featured over 400 exhibitors.

QUEBEC TECHNOLOGY FOR MANUFACTURING FIRE HOSES IN U.S.S.R.

In December, industrialists from Biisk, Siberia, signed an agreement in principle with Textiles Mercedes of Kirkland, near Montréal, a firm that specializes in a range of fire hoses patented in some 30 countries.

The agreement provides for creating a joint venture in Biisk to produce fire hoses from local raw materials. The Québec firm's technology makes it possible to fabricate seamless hoses of any length with ultrastrong polyester fibre. The hoses stay flexible at temperatures as low as -50 degrees C, and can be sheathed in coloured plastic.

There is a large market for the product in the U.S.S.R. The 60,000 metres of fire and industrial hoses the Soviets produce annually last about 5 years. With the technology developed in Québec, their production could reach 80,000 metres of high quality hose that would last for twenty years.

50 COUNTRIES DISCUSS WAR ON DRUGS

Montréal will host an international meeting next fall on strategies for fighting illegal drugs. The XIVth World Conference of Therapeutic Communities will bring 3,000 delegates from 50 countries to the city from September 22 to 27 to consider the theme "Drugs and Society to the Year 2000". Among those to address the conference are David Archibald, head of the Canadian Center for Addiction, Dr. Henri Laborit of France, known for his work on the relations between attitudes and illness, William F. Buckley, editor of the National Review, Charles Shuster, director of the National Institute of Drug Abuse in Washington, Elaine Johnson, an American psychiatrist who has innovated in the treatment of substance-abusive women, and David De Souza, Australia's Minister of Health.

The Montréal Urban Community, in collaboration with Canadian, American and European mayors, will organize a plenary session on "Drugs and Cities" that focuses on local action.

*** * * BUSINESS * * ***

Culinar Buys U.S. Snack Cake Baker

Culinar Inc. of Montréal, the purveyor of Vachon and Stuart snack cakes, has bought the assets of Drake Industries Inc., a New Jersey baker that is the largest snack cake producer in the northeastern United States. Drake has annual sales of over US\$100 million. Before the purchase, Culinar had sales of \$519 million.

The acquisition gives Culinar access to a vast U.S. market and is in line with the company's decision to narrow its product line to baked goods, president Jean-René Halde said. The company expects to introduce new production technologies to its American unit and new products such as low-cholesterol cakes. Culinar's big seller in Québec, and New England, is the legendary Joe Louis - named not for the American boxer but for the Vachon bakery founder's two sons. Drake for its part makes and distributes 30 kinds of snack cakes, including the Ring Ding - a Joe Louis look-alike, the Yankee Doodle and the Devil Dog.

Bombardier To Build Subway Cars For Boston

Transportation giant Bombardier Inc. has been awarded a \$155-million contract to develop and build subway cars for the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority of Boston. Won following an international tender, the contract calls for developing 86 cars for the transit authority with an option for an additional 56 cars. That would bring the total contract value to \$255 million.

Bombardier said the new generation of stainless steel cars will be built at its plants in La Pocatière, Québec, and Barre, Vermont, for delivery between June 1992 and June 1994. Most of the cars' systems - heating and cooling, communications, brakes, door control - rely on microcomputer technology.

In 1988, Bombardier received an order from the New York City transit system to design and build nine prototype cars, to be delivered in 1992. The Paris transit authority has entrusted Bombardier's French subsidiary ANF-Industrie with the design, development and production of coaches for the next generation of the Paris Métro. The first vehicle will be delivered in mid-1992.

CAE Electronics Lands U.S. Contract

CAE Electronics Ltd. of Montréal has won a multi-million-dollar contract to design and build a development flight simulator for McDonnell Douglas Corp.'s MD-88 aircraft. The simulator is to be delivered to the McDonnell Douglas training centre in Long Beach, California, in the spring of 1992.

*** * * TOURISM * * ***

Minister Of Tourism On Mission

On January 13, Minister of Tourism André Vallerand undertook a ten-day tourism promotion mission to Los Angeles, Tokyo, Rome and Milan. All are key markets. Over 70% of tourists to Québec last summer were Americans. The number of Japanese tourists was 10% higher in the summer of 1990 than the previous year, while the number of visitors from Italy increased from 13,000 in 1977 to 40,000 in 1989.

Mr. Vallerand's mission reflects a more aggressive approach to promoting Québec as a tourist destination par excellence.

Tourism Office Opens In Washington

Tourism Minister André Vallerand announced the opening of a Québec government tourism office in Washington, D.C. Supported by convention and tourism organizations in Montréal, Québec City and Laval and by the Québec Department of Tourism, the office is especially mandated to promote business tourism.

37th Carnaval De Québec Set To Go

Québec City will host the world's biggest winter celebration from February 7 to 17. Traditional crowd-pleasers are the crowning of the carnival queen at the ice palace in Old Québec, night parades and fireworks, the international snow and ice sculpture competitions, and canoe races across the ice-filled St. Lawrence.

A delegation from Mobile, Alabama, is taking part in the activities. State, city and church officials, business people and University of South Alabama scholars will meet their counterparts in Québec City, and host a Ball in the tradition of the Mobile Mardi Gras.

*** SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ***

Aerospace Vocational School

Government and Québec's growing aerospace industry have formed a partnership and will open a unique school in east-end Montréal in September 1992. L'Ecole des métiers de l'aérospatiale de Montréal is to provide post-secondary-school introductory and upgrading training and retraining in high-technology skills as well as customized courses designed to meet the specific needs of the industry. The school's four initial programs can accommodate 500 students.

Québec's education department is to contribute about \$6.5 million toward the school, the Montréal Catholic School Commission, \$6.8 million in money and equipment, and Employment and Immigration Canada, \$200,000. The aerospace industry, through its 14-member Centre for Aerospace Manpower Activities in Québec, is to supply materials for courses and high-technology equipment as well as advisors and on-the-job opportunities.

The new school will provide a different level and kind of training from what is available at l'Ecole nationale d'aéronautique at Edouard-Montpetit College on the South Shore. An estimated 1,600 jobs for skilled aerospace workers will open up by 1994, Education Minister Michel Pagé said. The Québec aerospace industry currently accounts for 26,000 jobs.

Bell Invests In Research At Polytechnique

Bell Canada and Ecole Polytechnique, Université de Montréal's engineering school, have signed a three-year, \$1.2-million research contract covering engineering and software quality, a strategic area for telecommunications. Professor Pierre Robillard and a computer engineering research team of twelve will analyze the process of software design from conception to final expression in computer language. Their aim is to develop a tool capable of evaluating a program while it is being designed, thereby making it possible to correct the program's basic structure. The resulting software is simplified and of better quality.

The Polytechnique research group, with support from Bell engineers, earlier developed Datrix, a program that tests forty parameters of computer programs. Bell and its affiliates now

make regular use of Datrix.

Québec City, A Mecca For Forestry Research

The Québec City area has, without fanfare, become the focal point for forestry research in Canada, according to data collected for the Greater Québec City technology park and the Conseil de la recherche forestière du Québec. Nearly 500 scientists work in the area at Québec's leading forestry research centres and schools and universities with forestry programs. In addition, roughly 500 forest-related industries producing pulp and paper, lumber, particle board, cardboard and a growing number of new products based on wood fibre lie within 100 km of Québec City.

Two of Québec's major silvicultural discoveries are a forest fire detection and prevention technique and a biological technique for combatting the spruce budworm. It has also developed recognized expertise in producing seedlings for reforestation.

Canada's First Chair In Medicinal Chemistry

On January 23, Université de Montréal officially inaugurated Canada's only chair in medicinal chemistry. Its holder, Dr. Stephen Hanessian, will pursue basic research on antibacterial antibiotics, immunochemistry and anti-viral compounds. A pioneer in modern synthetic organic chemistry, Dr. Hanessian has been at Université de Montréal since 1968. He is now in a position to assemble a team of 24 researchers, a dozen of them post-doctoral fellows.

Financing is assured in equal parts by the federal government, which funds some 86 university chairs in Canada, and three private firms. They are Lederle Laboratories, a division of American Cyanamid of Pearl River, New York; Biomara, a biotechnology laboratory in Edmonton, Alberta; and Bio-Mega of Laval, a division of Boehringer-Ingelheim of Germany.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Mr. John Ciaccia, Québec Minister of International Affairs, will visit Atlanta on April 9, 1991. He will speak at a Canadian-American Society of Southeastern United States luncheon. The location will be announced at a later date.

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QUÉBEC



Québec
Government House
in New York

UPDATE

Vol. XIV, No. 3, February 11, 1991

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS MINISTER INAUGURATES OFFICE IN PRAGUE

Québec Minister of International Affairs, John Ciaccia, and Czechoslovak Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Economy, Vladimír Dlouhý, officially inaugurated the Québec trade and cultural center in Prague on January 31. Its establishment is the direct result of Mr. Ciaccia's mission to Czechoslovakia last May. The center will be a pied-à-terre for Québec business people and provide the facilities and services necessary for conducting business. These include offices and meeting rooms, translation and interpretation services, telecommunications services and a documentation center.

The center is located in the heart of the historic capital in premises loaned by the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Economy. It will be funded and managed by the Conseil d'affaires Tchèque et Slovaque du Québec, a private-sector organization set up last November by Québec business leaders.

QUEBEC TO TAKE PART IN WORLD'S FAIR IN SEVILLE

International Affairs Minister John Ciaccia announced that Québec will have an exhibit at Seville's Universal and International Exhibition in 1992, the final world's fair of the century. Ninety countries have confirmed their participation and 16 international organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization of American States and the Interamerican Development Bank. Fifty million visitors are expected to attend.

FIFTY COUNTRIES WILL DISCUSS WAR ON DRUGS

Montréal will host an international meeting next fall on strategies for fighting illegal drugs. The XIVth World Conference of Therapeutic Communities will bring 3000 delegates from 50 countries to the city from September 22 to 27 to consider the theme "Drugs and Society to the Year 2000." Among those to address the conference are David Archibald, head of the Canadian Center for Addiction, Dr. Henri Laborit of France, who is known for his work on the relations between attitudes and illness, William F. Buckley, editor of the National Review, Charles Shuster, director of the National Institute of Drug Abuse in Washington, Elaine Johnson, an American psychiatrist who has been innovative in the treatment of substance-abusive women, and David De Souza, Australia's Minister of Health.

(Unless otherwise specified, all figures are in Canadian dollars.)

HYDRO ISSUES BONDS IN U.S., SIGNS PROTOCOL OF UNDERSTANDING WITH GUINEA

New Hydro-Québec bonds totalling US\$900 million were literally snapped up in two and a half hours after their issue on January 30 in New York. According to André Marcil, chief financial officer, the sale represented the largest offering ever of fixed-rate bonds by a foreign entity in the American market. Mr. Marcil said the successful issue was in part due to the excellent reputation of the utility.

The bonds, which have a 9.5% interest rate and a 30-year maturity date, were rated Aa-3 by Moody's and AA- by Standard & Poor's. Moody's based their rating, which has remained unchanged since July 1986, on the fact that the province's finances are well controlled. The steady growth of the Québec economy during the 1980s and its diversification were also cited.

-- Protocol of Understanding with Guinea --

Hydro-Québec International has signed a protocol of understanding with the government of Guinea giving it priority in submitting a proposal for managing Guinea's electrical system. This includes power generation, transport, and eventually, distribution. The understanding was signed on January 24 in Conakry by Guinean authorities, Hydro officials and Québec's Minister of Energy and Resources, Lise Bacon.

Hydro-Québec International and its partners have until April 1 to prepare the proposal. Although Guinea has West Africa's greatest hydroelectric potential -- 6000 MW -- its current installations produce less than 100 MW. Wood and charcoal account for 85% of domestic energy consumption. The Guinean government is considering the feasibility of developing a complex that would include a dam on the Konkouré river and an aluminum smelter to exploit the country's bauxite reserves.

MONTREAL DOCTORS TAKING PART IN HEART-ATTACK DRUG STUDY

Montréalers have become part of an international experiment to determine whether quick treatment with a new drug can dramatically reduce deaths from heart attacks. Montréal is the sole North American city in the study conducted by the European Community because Urgences Santé doctors are the only ones on the continent who routinely ride with ambulances on emergencies.

The drug being studied, anistreplase, is the latest in a line of heart-attack medications known as thrombolytic, or clot-dissolving, drugs. Time is critical in restoring the flow of blood to the victim's heart muscle. Anistreplase can be administered with a single needle injection in the arm, while the well-established thrombolytic drugs are administered by a slow-drip intravenous injection lasting one to four hours. In addition, the new drug can be given even before the heart-attack victim reaches the hospital.

Dr. Mathias Kalina, the Montréal coordinator of the experiment, said researchers are trying to evaluate on-the-spot treatment with anistreplase with 10,000 patients. The results will probably be available in 1992.

UNIVERSITY INAUGURATES CANADA'S FIRST CHAIR IN MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY

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organic chemistry, Dr. Hanessian has been at the university since 1968. He is now in a position to assemble a team of 24 researchers, a dozen of them post-doctoral fellows.

Financing is assured in equal parts by the federal government, which funds some 86 university chairs in Canada, and three private firms. They are Lederle Laboratories, a division of American Cyanamid of Pearl River, New York; Biomara, a biotechnology laboratory in Edmonton, Alberta; and Bio-Mega of Laval, a division of Boehringer-Ingelheim of Germany.

MONTREAL GEARING UP FOR 350TH ANNIVERSARY

-- 60 Projects Get Green Light --

The organizers of Montréal's 350th birthday party have approved sixty projects to help the city celebrate appropriately in 1992. Coordinating the activities under the theme "Hommage à Montréal," La Corporation des fêtes du 350e anniversaire de Montréal will give \$2.3 million for a host of projects in the fields of culture, sports, the environment and youth. Corporation director Michel Petit explained that several projects will deal specifically with the history of the city. "Art in all its forms will occupy a special place in the festivities because it appropriately conveys Montréal's creative strengths. Montréal's ethnic communities will also be well represented," he said.

-- City to Host International Winter Cities Biennial --

The Fifth International Winter Cities Biennial will kick off the official celebration in February, 1992. This past January, Mayor Jean Doré went to the Sapporo, Japan, headquarters of the international winter cities movement to present the organizing committee's progress report. Approximately 40 mayors of northern cities in 16 European, Asian and North American cities are expected at the Montréal event whose general theme is "Living in Harmony with Winter." Environment, urban planning and fitness through outdoor activities will be the focus of discussions.

Montréal may well be the leading "northern city" next year. The Biennial will be followed by Polartech '92, an international conference on the development and commercial use of technologies in polar regions. This conference is being organized by the McGill University Centre for Northern Studies and Research and is to be held outside Scandinavia for the first time.

-- Biosphere to Be Restored --

Probably the most concrete evidence of the year-long birthday bash will be on Ile Ste. Hélène, site of Expo 76. The former U.S. pavilion, the Biosphere, is part of a \$57 million restoration of the entire site, announced by Mayor Jean Doré on January 28. Designed by the late Buckminster Fuller, a world-renowned architect and engineer, the Biosphere was the world's largest geodesic dome when it was originally built.

The restored dome will house a "water and environment interpretation center" in a 3,716-square-meter building to be built inside the 20-story building. Several other projects, especially for the western half of the island, will also be ready for summer 1992. Plans call for tearing up perimeter roads and replacing them with biking paths and hiking trails, allowing Montrealers to get closer to the St. Lawrence. The area around the Biosphere will be landscaped to create an open-air amphitheater to accommodate crowds up to 100,000.

-- Historical Displays Planned for Four Museums --

An ambitious exhibition chronicling the city's first 350 years, "Montréal d'hier à demain," will be housed in four of Montréal's finest museums: the Ramezay, McCord, Stewart and the former Bonsecours market. Between May and October of 1992, the \$3.7 million project will cover four different aspects: the discovery of Montréal, the period leading to the city's incorporation, construction of the Victoria Bridge and the 20th century.

Finally, a special anniversary emphasis will be given to the city's regular festivals and events in 1992 -- the Benson & Hedges International Fireworks Competition, the International Jazz and Just for Laugh Festivals, the World Film Festival, etc. For a preliminary brochure of events, please contact Québec Tourism at (212) 397 - 0220.

***** BUSINESS BRIEFS *****

STI Software Package for Senegal

Montréal-based STI (Services Techniques Informatiques), with assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency, has won a \$2-million contract to computerize the services of Senegal's largest private employer, the Caisse de sécurité sociale de Dakar. STI will install its financial management software package. The Montréal company is already active in Mali, Bénin and Cameroon.

Port of Montréal Sets Containerized Cargo Traffic Record

A record 5.8 million metric tons of containerized cargo traffic, a marked improvement in grain movements, a net income from operations of \$3.6 million, and a net income of \$10.8 million are the highlights of the Port of Montréal's 1990 operating results.

Total traffic handled at the port increased by 1.3 million metric tons or 6.5%, to reach 21.7 million metric tons in 1990. (A metric ton is equal to 2,204.62 pounds.)

IAF, Glaxo Form Joint Venture

IAF Biochem International Inc. of Montréal has signed a definitive agreement with the Canadian unit of Britain's Glaxo Holdings PLC to form a 50-50 joint venture to commercialize future anti-cancer and anti-viral compounds discovered by IAF. An agreement in principle was announced in November. Under the agreement, and if all options are exercised, Glaxo would hold just under 20% of IAF.

Ciné Group to Market Cartoons in U.S.

Montréal-based Ciné Groupe, the second-largest animation company in Canada, recently opened a U.S. office to market its "Little Flying Bears" series. James Witker, managing director of the new office, said that this series had the best potential for breaking into the U.S. market. "We're not Disney yet," he said, "so we have to have a niche. I call it 'edutainment.'" Cartoons with a message are the future of animation, he contends.

The company has an extensive computer graphic facility in Montréal and does most of its animation production in Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

"Les Filles de Caleb" Soon to Be Seen in Germany, Spain, Israel

Québec's current top-ranking television program, "Les Filles de Caleb," will soon be seen in Germany, Israel, Spain and Yugoslavia, and Cité-Amérique, its producer, intends to continue marketing the 20-part series. "Les Filles de Caleb," based on the first volume of Arlette Cousture's 1985 best-seller, takes an unvarnished yet sympathetic look at the life of a strong-minded young woman in the Saint-Maurice region early in the century. She teaches in a country school, marries, has several children and bears with the husband she has chosen. The series took top awards for both best female and best male performer at the recent Festival international des productions audio-visuelles in Cannes.

"Les Filles de Caleb" has been phenomenally successful in Québec since it premiered last fall. Over three million Quebecers (3,363,000 on November 29, 1990, according to the Bureau of Broadcast Measurement) in a population of 6.7 million have been tuning in on Thursday night to see what happens next to Emilie and Ovila.

Gélinas Honored at Festive Gala

"Québec theater begins with Monsieur Gélinas," said one participant in the festive homage to Gratien Gélinas at Montréal's Théâtre Denise Pelletier on February 4. Mr. Gélinas, 82, was honored by the cream of the Montréal artistic community for his 52-year-long, distinguished career in theater.

Indeed, during the 3 1/2 hour gala more than forty artists, including playwright Michel Tremblay, pop singer Mitsou (Gélinas' granddaughter), and actress Denise Filiatrault, saluted Mr. Gélinas' career through film clips, readings, dances, songs and tributes. Proceeds from the event went to the new Gratien Gélinas Fund, created to support the work of new playwrights.

In Canada, Mr. Gélinas has probably been the most successful of all Canadian playwrights. His early work consisted of revues that satirized both provincial and federal sacred cows, such as "Les Fridolinades," which opened in 1938 and packed the Monument National Theater for seven seasons. In 1948, he had another success with "Tit-Coq," the heart-warming story of a young Quebecer who leaves his girlfriend behind when he goes to fight in World War II. It had 500 performances in Montréal, Toronto and, briefly, New York, and was later made into a film. Mr. Gélinas' most recent play, "The Passion of Narcisse Mondoux," had a successful run in New York last year and has just passed its 500th performance in Toronto.

Federal Communications Minister Marcel Masse said that "Gratien Gélinas was born somewhere in our collective unconscious...He is as old as our dreams and as young as our spirit."

Montréal Pastry Chefs Rank Third in Chocolate Cup

The Québec team representing Canada at the Coupe du Monde de la Pâtisserie came in an honorable third after Japan and France. Fifteen countries took part in the world cup competition which is organized every other year in Lyons by the chocolate maker Valrhona. The Québec pastry chefs, all under 30, were born and trained in the province. Two work for Pâtisserie Chez Gaumond in Montréal and the third for the Hôtel Ritz Carleton.

Tougas, Lisée Win Governor-General's Awards

Gérald Tougas and Jean-François Lisée received Canada's highest literary awards for French-language fiction and non-fiction, respectively, in late January. The Governor-General's Award comes with a \$10,000 check. Tougas' La Mauvaise foi, the first novel by the Granby Cegep literature professor, is set in his native Manitoba. It is an interior journey through a largely rural landscape, the history of a country and a family history.

Dans l'oeil de l'aigle is a triumph of investigative journalism by La Presse's one-time Washington correspondent. Mr. Lisée documents relations between the American government and Québec, and the way in which successive presidents have viewed Québec nationalism. The English translation, In the Eye of the Eagle, has just been published by HarperCollins Canada.

February: Québec Culture Month in The Big Apple

With a flurry of cultural events descending on New York from "La belle province" this month, February could well be called Québec Culture Month. An important design exhibition, new films by two Québec directors, a French opera and recent works by Montréal artists should help warm up this normally chilly month.

• "Design 1935 - 65: What Modern Was" Opens at IBM Gallery

The first international survey of mid-20th century design, organized by the Montréal Museum of Decorative Arts, will open at the IBM Gallery of Science and Art on February 26. The exhibition, featuring over 250 outstanding examples of both mass-produced and hand-crafted furniture, ceramics, glass, textiles, jewelry, metalware and graphics, will run through April 27, then travel to seven other museums.

"What Modern Was" comprises works drawn from the Museum's Liliane and David M. Stewart Collection, which has grown into one of the foremost collections of its kind in North America. This is the first large-scale museum exhibition to explore modernism in international design from a historical and scholarly perspective. The collection includes works by such renown artists as Picasso, Alexander Calder, Frank Lloyd Wright and Cartier.

Of the exhibition's significance, Dr. Luc D'Iberville-Moreau, director of the Museum, says, "Design theory from the middle years of this century often proclaimed that less was more. Now, however, with the advent of post-modernism, we are also able to see that sometimes more was more -- the richly ornamented surfaces and textures of many mid-century designs indicates a great attraction to irrational styles such as Surrealism and to ornament inspired by the art of Picasso and Matisse."

Montréal's Museum of Decorative Arts, housed in the historic Château Dufresne, is dedicated to the collection and exhibition of decorative arts and international design from 1935 to the present. Since its founding in 1979 by Mr. and Mrs. David M. Stewart, the Museum has developed into a critical and educational force for the design community and the public.

The gallery, located at Madison Avenue and 56th Street, is open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Admission is free.

• "Perfectly Normal" Now Playing at a Theater Near You

The first English-language film from acclaimed Québec director Yves Simoneau, "Perfectly Normal," opened commercially on February 15 in Toronto, Montréal, Los Angeles and New York City. The film is a Bialystack & Bloom production in cooperation with Canadian and British film companies.

The film recounts the comic story of Renzo Parachi (Michael Riley), a "perfectly normal" guy. He works in a brewery, plays goalie for the company hockey team and occasionally drives a cab for extra money. Mostly, though, he keeps to himself...until he meets larger-than-life Alonzo Turner (Robbie Coltrane), a lovable smooth operator with a shady past and an insatiable love of wine, women, opera and Italian food.

"My main intention," said Mr. Simoneau, "is that this not be a typical comedy." The fact that his main character is transformed (he ends up singing opera in women's dress in an Italian restaurant) seems to support Mr. Simoneau's intent.

Mr. Simoneau, 35, received national attention in 1986 with "Pouvoir Intime," a superb thriller about a Brinks robbery that goes very wrong for all but one of its participants. A France-Canada production, "Les Fous de Bassan," followed, with less success. His next project, "Dans le ventre du dragon," an odd mix of comedy and sci-fi fantasy, was a smash hit in Québec and Canada.

Mr. Simoneau, now living in Los Angeles, has just finished filming "Memphis," starring Cybill Shepherd, for U.S. television. Ms. Shepherd herself chose Mr. Simoneau after having seen "Perfectly Normal." This could be his big break into the American market. "Memphis" was made for Propaganda Films, the hot new company co-founded by David Lynch, creator of "Blue Velvet," "Wild at Heart," and "Twin Peaks."

Will he ever work in Québec again? "It's not that I don't think I will be working in Québec anymore, it's simply that I'm always looking for new hunting grounds," he explained. "When I was 25, I thought that I could invent an industrial film super-structure in Québec City, until I realized that I would have to go to Montréal 10 times a week to make it. Then when I moved to Montréal, I realized there were certain films I could only do outside the province, because some movies I had in mind cost more than \$3.5 million, and that is the ceiling for a Québec film."

• "Straight for the Heart" Opens at Cinema Village

A film which pays loving tribute to the architecture, climate and culture of Montréal is now playing at Cinema Village (3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th St.) in New York City. "Straight for the Heart," directed by Lea Pool, is a Swiss-Canadian production which examines the midlife crisis of a hardened photojournalist, Pierre Kurwenal (Matthias Habich) against a backdrop of wonderfully moody cityscapes.

Pierre returns from his latest assignment in Nicaragua to find that his once-happy ménage à trois with Sarah (Johanne-Marie Tremblay), a violinist, and David (Michael Volta), a younger man who trains dolphins, is over. Apparently Sarah and David fell more in love with each other than with him -- Sarah is having David's baby. Pierre handles his suddenly-single situation by taking on a new project, a photojournalistic study of urban corrosion. When not working, he mopes around Montréal until he establishes a tentative relationship with a deaf window washer he picks up in a bar.

The movie is adapted from a novel by Yves Navarre but, like a poem, has few words. Indeed, Montréal is lyrically portrayed as a clean, spacious city with immaculately gleaming towers and only a few streaks of rust. Even the graffiti that Pierre photographs seems genteel, with an almost painted beauty.

• Krausz, Allain Present Latest Works in Soho

Two Montréal-based artists will display their recent work this month in Soho. Peter Krausz will present "Journeys" at the 49th Parallel Gallery (420 Broadway; tel: (212) 925 - 8349) from February 16 to March 16. His medium of expression varies widely -- from oil, tar, pastel and charcoal on copper, wood and photographs to sculptural installations of beeswax and steel. Repeatedly, though, he returns to sites marked by a totalitarian age, rendering them in an evocative and poetic way.

René Pierre Allain will present some of his latest constructed paintings at the Julian Pretto Gallery (54 MacDougal Street; tel: (212) 673 -7662) February 26 through March 16. Mr. Allain's work borrows from frescoes the notion of painting inhabiting an architecturally determined space. His paintings are made up of layers of pigmented plaster compound and contained in steel structures fastened to the wall.

• I Musici de Montréal Plays to Sold-Out House

The first New York City concert by renowned chamber orchestra I Musici de Montréal is sold out, which is good news for the ensemble but bad news for those unable to obtain tickets. Conducted by founding director Yuli Turovsky, I Musici de Montréal will perform Sunday, February 24 at Town Hall.

With more than 20 recordings on the prestigious Chandos label, the orchestra is the most listened to Canadian chamber orchestra in the world. Since its first public appearance in November 1984, I Musici de Montréal has enjoyed an enviable reputation on both the national and international scenes. Critics have praised the exceptional quality of the ensemble and its remarkable achievements. In 1990, the ensemble was invited to perform for President Gorbachev in Ottawa and the Prime Minister of France, Michel Rocard, before being invited to play in Seoul.

Québec pianist Louis Lortie has also recorded for Chandos, a label that is easily found in better record stores in New York City.

• Montréal Soprano to Sing in French Opera

Montréal-born Sharon Rachelle Azrieli will sing in Bizet's "Le Docteur Miracle," part of a concert evening of French opera organized by L'Opéra français de New York and the Alliance Française/French Institute on February 23. "Le Docteur Miracle" is part of a double-bill of delightful one-act operas drawn from commedia dell'arte stories to be performed in concert form with full orchestra. It tells how a spirited captain, through a series of humorous disguises, thwarts a tyrannical father in order to win the hand of his daughter.

Ms. Azrieli has studied in New York since 1987 and won last year's Canadian Women's Competition. Tickets (\$15.00 and \$12.00) may be ordered from the Institute by calling (212) 355 - 6160.